

REMARKS

The final Office Action was issued on pending claims 16-50. Claims 16-38 stand rejected and claims 39-50 were withdrawn from consideration. In this Response, claims 16, 23, 34, 36 and 37 have been amended, and no claims have been cancelled or added. Thus, claims 16-38 are pending and under consideration in the application.

Applicant invites the Examiner to call Applicant's Representative to discuss any issues with this application.

Election/Restriction

In Office Action paragraph 1, claims 39-50 submitted in the previous Office Action response were subjected to a restriction requirement. Claims 39-50 were withdrawn from consideration as being directed to a non-elected invention. The Office Action states that the invention of claims 39-46 and the invention of claims 47-50 are distinct inventions.

Applicant traverses the restriction requirement. The two criteria which must be met for a proper restriction requirement are (1) the inventions must be independent or distinct as claimed, and (2) there must be a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction is required. M.P.E.P. § 803. Applicant respectfully submits that there would not be a serious burden on the Examiner if the restriction is not required in this case. Particularly, Applicant submits that a search and examination of claims 39-46 and claims 47-50 in this application would not impose a serious burden on the Examiner. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

In Office Action paragraph 3, claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Although Applicant submits claim 23 is definite, claim 23 has been amended to clarify the claim. The amendment to claim 23 does not narrow the claim or surrender any subject matter.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the §112 rejection has been overcome.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

In Office Action paragraph 5, claims 16-17, 24, 26-27, 30-34 and 36-37 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baldini et al.* (US 4,656,813) in view of *Fabricius* (US 5,069,017) and further in view of *Takagaki et al.* (US 5,606,844). In Office Action paragraph 6, claims 18-20, 28-29 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baldini et al.* in view of *Fabricius* and *Takagaki et al.* and further in view of *Duffey et al.* (US 5,129,212). In Office Action paragraph 7, claims 21-22 and 38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baldini et al.* in view of *Fabricius*, *Takagaki et al.* and *Duffy et al.* and further in view of *Madsen* (US 3,451,403). In Office Action paragraph 8, claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baldini et al.* in view of *Fabricius*, *Takagaki et al.*, and further in view of *Ogata* (GB 2142282 A). In Office Action paragraph 9, claim 25 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baldini et al.* in view of *Fabricius*, *Takagaki et al.* and *Ogata* and further in view of *Brennan et al.* (US 4,587,793). In Office Action paragraph 10, claim 33 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Baldini et al.* in view of *Fabricius* and *Takagaki et al.* and further in view of *Aindow et al.* (US 5,934,043). Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Independent claims 16 and 34 have been amended to clarify the claims. Particularly, the dry cleaning steps of claims 16 and 34 have been clarified. The dry cleaning steps call for dry cleaning the printed film by directing a gas from a gas applicator toward and across surfaces of the film and flowing particles removed from the surfaces and the gas out through a nozzle such that the film is not touched during dry cleaning. Dependent claims 36 and 37 have been amended to be consistent with claim 16.

One example of Applicant's claimed dry cleaning step is shown in Figs. 2B and 2C. The printed film FST is dry cleaned by directing a gas from a gas applicator 104, 107 toward and across surfaces of the film FST. Particles removed from the surfaces of the film FST and the gas are flowed out through nozzles 103, 105, 106, 108 such that the film is not touched during dry cleaning. The cleaned film is designated as FSTL.

Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references, alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest Applicant's claimed invention, particularly the dry cleaning step.

Baldini et al., shows in Fig. 1 a washing sequence 3 having an ultra sonic cleaning unit 3a and a distilled water washing unit 3b. See *Baldini et al.*, column 2, lines 41-52. The Office Action acknowledges that *Baldini et al.* does not describe dry cleaning the printed film.

Fabricus pertains to an aseptic filling machine for food. *Fabricus* describes dry cleaning a film in which the film runs through a chamber with slot nozzles which repeatedly suck the film in and release it again and thus bring it into oscillation. The oscillations result in throwing off of foreign substances adhering to the film and sucking them away by means of a suction device. *Fabricus* dry cleans by oscillating the film to throw foreign substances off of the film. Oscillation of the film is provided by repeatedly sucking the film in and releasing the film. Accordingly, *Fabricus* does not disclose or suggest dry cleaning a printed film by directing a gas from a gas applicator toward the surfaces of the film. Applicant respectfully submits that it would not be obvious to modify the *Fabricus* machine to dry clean the printed film by directing a gas from a gas applicator toward the film because *Fabricus* dry cleans the film by oscillating the film under suction.

As to the remaining references relied on in the Office Action to reject the claims, Applicant respectfully submits that those references do not remedy the deficiencies of *Baldini et al.* and *Fabricus*. Indeed, the Office Action does not assert that those references disclose or suggest dry cleaning a printed film.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the §103 rejections have been overcome.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the patent application is in condition for allowance and requests a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

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